

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 ISO-00

OIC-02 SP-02 L-03 SS-15 /049 W

----- 050432

R 121417Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7773

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 04340

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNESCO, US

SUBJECT: UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD - AN ANALYSIS

SUMMARY: THERE HAVE BEEN THREE US MEMBERS OF THE UNESCO EXBD IN THE LAST THREE YEARS AND THE POSITION IS AGAIN VACANT. THE CHARACTER OF THE BOARD HAS CHANGED AND IT NOW COMPOSED ALMOST ENTIRELY OF PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE EXPERTS ON UNESCO AND UN AFFAIRS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE SOVIET BOARD MEMBER IS LEONOID KOUTAKOV FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND FORMERLY DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN. TO BE ADEQUATELY PREPARED THE BOARD MEMBER MUST HIMSELF READ THE DOCUMENTS, QUICK BRIEFINGS JUST PRIOR TO A MEETING SIMPLY ARE NOT ADEQUATE. THE UPCOMING SPRING SESSION WILL BE THE MOST COMPLICATED AND SENSITIVE IN THE HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION. THERE ARE SOME 66 ITEMS ALREADY ON THE PRELIMINARY AGENDA. MANY POLITICAL ISSUES WILL ARISE, AND THE PROGRAM DEBATES WILL INCLUDE ANALYSIS OF THE 600-PAGE BIENNIAL PROGRAM PLAN AND BUDGET AS WELL AS THE LONG AND MEDIUM TERM PROGRAM PLANS. AN INEXPERIENCED US BOARD MEMBER FILLING OUT AN UNEXPIRED TERM WILL FIND IT MOST DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, TO ADEQUATELY UNDERSTAND AND PARTICIPATE IN THE SESSIONS.

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1. THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD IS COMPOSED OF 40

MEMBERS, NOMINATED BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS, BUT OSTENSIBLY REPRESENTING THEMSELVES PERSONALLY. THIS IS A FICTION WHICH IS NOW MEANINGLESS. IN FACT, ALL MEMBERS NOW FUNCTION AS GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES AND, INDEED, MOST OF THEM ARE NOW EITHER PERMANENT DELEGATES OR COME FROM GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES.

UNITED STATES

REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD HAS BEEN UNEVEN, TO SAY THE LEAST. THERE HAVE BEEN THREE U.S. EXBD MEMBERS IN THE LAST THREE YEARS AND THE POSITION IS ONCE AGAIN VACANT AS A RESULT OF THE RESIGNATION OF THE MOST RECENT. THE TERM OF OFFICE IS FOUR YEARS.

2. BY WAY OF BACKGROUND, IN THE SPRING OF 1973 BEFORE EXPIRATION OF TERM THE THEN BOARD MEMBER RESIGNED. THE NEW MEMBER, A PRIVATE BUSINESSMAN, WAS APPOINTED IN THE FALL OF 1973 AND ARRIVED IN PARIS FOR THE FALL BOARD SESSION ON THE DAY OF ITS OPENING. THIS MEMBER OF THE BOARD ATTENDED APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE FALL 1973 SESSION, AND ABOUT HALF OF THE SPRING 1974 SESSION. A BOARD SESSION IS GENERALLY FIVE TO SIX WEEKS. THE BOARD MEMBER DID NOT ATTEND THE FALL 1974 SESSION AT ALL AND DID NOT TRAVEL WITH THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON ITS TRIP TO BULGARIA AS GUEST OF THAT COUNTRY. ALL TOTAL THIS BOARD MEMBERS SPENT ABOUT SIX WEEKS, OVER A PERIOD OF THREE BOARD SESSIONS, IN PARIS.

3. THE NEXT BOARD MEMBER WAS ELECTED BY THE 1974 GENERAL CONFERENCE AND ATTENDED THE SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THAT MEETING IN NOVEMBER 1974. HE ATTENDED THE SPRING 1975 SESSION FOR A LITTLE OVER TWO WEEKS, ABOUT ONE HALF OF THE SPRING SESSION, AND DID NOT COME AT ALL TO THE FALL 1975 SESSION. THIS MEMBER HAS NOW RESIGNED.

4. IN YEARS GONE BY THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD WAS VIEWED AS A FORUM OF INTELLECTUALS WHO WOULD GIVE POLICY GUIDANCE TO THE ORGANIZATION. IT IS NOW A GROUP MAINLY OF HIGHLY TRAINED GOVERNMENT EXPERTS OR PRIVATE PERSONS WITH LONG EXPERIENCE IN UNESCO AFFAIRS. THE CONFIDENTIAL

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BOARD IS CALLED UPON TO REVIEW IN DEPTH EXTREMELY COMPLICATED PROGRAM ISSUES--SUCH AS THE METHODOLOGY FOR LONG RANGE PLANNING, A BUDGET DOCUMENT OF ABOUT 600 PAGES, A REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ON ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ABOUT 300 PAGES AND MANY OTHER ISSUES OF PLANNING AND ANALYSIS. IN ADDITION, POLITICAL ITEMS OF GREAT SENSITIVITY PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN BOARD

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INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 ISO-00

OIC-02 SP-02 L-03 SS-15 /049 W
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R 121417Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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MEETINGS AND MUCH TIME IS SPENT IN DEBATES ON RESOLUTIONS INVOLVING UNESCO'S ROLE VIS A VIS ISRAEL, CHILE, AND OTHER POLITICAL ISSUES. TO ADEQUATELY PREPARE FOR A BOARD MEETING A MEMBER SHOULD READ AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS ISSUES COVERING WELL OVER 1000 PAGES OF DOCUMENTS. IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT DOCUMENTS BE READ AND UNDERSTOOD FOR A MEMBER TO BE PREPARED TO ENTER INTO A DEBATE. PREPARED STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD ARE NOT EFFECTIVE, EXCEPT ON A VERY LIMITED NUMBER OF ITEMS.

5. OTHER NATIONS HAVE RECOGNIZED THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE UNESCO EXBD AND GEARED THEMSELVES UP ACCORDINGLY. SOME EXAMPLES: THE BRITISH MEMBER OF THE BOARD IS A HIGH LEVEL PROFESSIONAL FROM THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT WHO ALSO SITS ON THE BOARD OF THE UNDP, UNCTAD, FAO AND UNIDO. HE DEVOTES HIS FULL TIME TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS. THE FRG MEMBER OF THE BOARD IS A CAREER PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT WHO FORMERLY WAS THE FRG AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE. THE JAPANESE MEMBER IS HEAD OF THE UNESCO SECTION OF THEIR FOREIGN OFFICE AND A CAREER PROFESSIONAL OF AMBASSADORIAL RANK. THE BELGIUM BOARD MEMBER IS THEIR PERMANENT DELEGATE, AMBASSADOR TO UNESCO, WHO IS A CAREER DIPLOMAT. THE BRAZILIAN MEMBER IS PART OF THEIR UNESCO DELEGATION, AND THEY ALSO HAVE

A PERMREP AMBASSADOR, WHOSE PREVIOUS POST WAS AMBAS-
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SADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION. THE BRAZILIAN BOARD MEMBER HAS A TOUR OF PREVIOUS SERVICE ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, AND IS CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE NUBIAN MONUMENTS. THE EGYPTIAN, TOGOLESE, AND SAUDIA ARABIANS ARE REPRESENTED BY THEIR PERMANENT DELEGATES. THE USSR EX.BD. MEMBER, LEONID N. KOUTAKOV, IS A CAREER DIPLOMAT FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND WAS FORMERLY DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS AT THE UNITED NATIONS. THE FRENCH BOARD MEMBER IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND THE ITALIAN IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ITALIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION WHO DEVOTES FULL TIME TO UNESCO AFFAIRS.

6. IN THE FALL 1974 SESSION AND THE FALL 1975 SESSIONS, WHEN THE U.S. EXBD MEMBER DID NOT COME AT ALL, THE PERMANENT REP. SAT AS BOARD MEMBER AND ALSO ACCOMPANIED THE BOARD ON ITS VISITS TO BULGARIA, SUMMER 1974 AND TO EGYPT, FALL 1974, IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BOARD MEMBER.

7. THE PERMANENT DELEGATION IN PARIS HAS REGULARLY PREPARED THOROUGHLY FOR EACH BOARD MEETING. ASSIGNMENTS ARE MADE TO THE VARIOUS OFFICERS ON THE DELEGATION OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND EACH OFFICER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING THE ITEMS ASSIGNED TO HIM. GENERALLY, IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BOARD MEMBER, OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ITEMS SIT IN THE CHAIR DURING DISCUSSIONS OF THE AGENDA POINTS. THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE HAS CONCENTRATED ON POLITICAL ISSUES - I.E., ISRAEL, CHILE, PUERTO RICO, AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, APARTHEID,-- AND THE BIENNIAL BUDGET. WHILE THE DEPUTY PERMREP AND ALL OTHER DEL OFFS HAVE CONCENTRATED ON PROGRAMATIC ASPECTS, PARTICULARLY PROGRAM ANALYSIS AND PLANNING.

8. WHEN THE U.S. EXBD MEMBER HAS ATTENDED BOARD SESSIONS HE HAS AT LEAST DURING THE TWO AND ONE HALF YEARS OF PERMREP'S TENURE, ARRIVED JUST BEFORE THE START OF THE SESSION AND WITHOUT HAVING READ THE DOCUMENTS. FREQUENTLY THE EXBD MEMBERS HAVE NOT BEEN INTERESTED IN THE PROGRAMATIC ASPECTS OF THE MEETING,
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AS THESE ARE OFTEN DULL AND COMPLICATED AND TECHNICAL. YET, IN ORDER TO MAKE SOME CONTRIBUTION TO DEBATES THAT USUALLY LAST FOR SEVERAL DAYS ON KEY ITEMS, THE U.S. BOARD MEMBER IS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ A STATEMENT INTO THE RECORD. AS THE DEBATES ARE FLUID AND THE TONE IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING THIS HAS PROVED EMBARRASSING AS THE EXBD MEMBER DID NOT HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OR BACKGROUND TO RESPOND EXTEMPORANEOUSLY TO ISSUES AS THEY AROSE. THE EXBD CHAMBER IS LAID OUT IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE BOARD MEMBERS SIT AROUND A TABLE, NEXT TO EACH OTHER, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR DELEGATION OFFICERS TO SIT EITHER BESIDE OR EVEN DIRECTLY BEHIND A BOARD MEMBER TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE. BOARD MEMBERS HAVE ALSO BEEN EMBARRASSED IN CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS BY QUESTIONS FROM THEIR COUNTERPARTS WHICH THEY WERE NOT QUALIFIED TO ANSWER. IT SOON BECAME EVIDENT TO OTHER BOARD MEMBERS THAT THE U.S. MEMBER WAS NOT AN EXPERT ON UNESCO OR UN AFFAIRS AND THIS TENDED TO MAKE THE U.S. MEMBER UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN

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INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 ISO-00

OIC-02 SP-02 L-03 SS-15 /049 W
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R 121417Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AROUND HIS COLLEAGUES.

9. ON POLITICAL ISSUES THE BOARD MEMBERS HAVE OFTEN BEEN RELUCTANT TO TAKE DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTIONS. TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THIS DELEGATION, NO OTHER OF THE MAJOR POWERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PERMITS A CIVILIAN

BOARD MEMBER TO SIT ON SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUES. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO UNESCO OR SOMEONE FROM THE FOREIGN OFFICE WILL REGULARLY REPLACE THE BOARD MEMBER IN POLITICAL DEBATES AND THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO UNESCO, WHO IS A CAREER OFFICER, ALWAYS SITS FOR HIS BOARD MEMBER ON POLITICAL ITEMS. BUT WITH THE U.S. IT HAS BEEN DIFFERENT SINCE THE BOARD MEMBERS ARE INTERESTED IN POLITICAL EVENTS AND HAVE WANTED TO PERSONALLY HANDLE POLITICAL ITEMS. SOME CONFUSION HAS ARISEN AS THE BOARD MEMBER HAS BEEN KNOWN TO SAY THAT SINCE HE OR SHE IS AN APPOINTEE OF THE PRESIDENT HE NEED NOT TAKE INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE. THIS HAS OFTEN CREATED AN AMBIGUOUS SITUATION WHICH SHOULD BE CLARIFIED.

10. IT MAY BE WELL TO NOTE THAT THE SUCCESS AT THE LAST FALL BOARD MEETING IN GETTING THROUGH A PRO ISRAEL RESOLUTION OCCURED WHEN THE BOARD MEMBER DID NOT ATTEND AND WHEN THE PERMDEL COULD DEVOTE ITS FULL TIME AND ENERGY IN PURSUING THE SENSITIVE NEGOTIATIONS THAT WERE REQUIRED.

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11. IN CONCLUSION, U.S. BOARD MEMBERS, UNFORTUNATELY, HAVE NOT REALIZED THAT THEY WILL BE UP AGAINST PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE EXPERIENCED, HAVE SPENT LONG HOURS READING DOCUMENTS AND GENERALLY KNOW THE RULES OF THE GAME. THIS HAS TENDED TO DISCOURAGE THE U.S. BOARD MEMBER AND HAS SURELY REDUCED EFFECTIVENESS IN PURSUING U.S. INTEREST.

12. THE UPCOMING SPRING SESSION WILL BE THE MOST COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT IN A LONG WHILE DUE TO THE MANY SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUES COMING UP AND BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUS FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE ORGANIZATION. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL WILL PRESENT HIS NEW PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE UPCOMING BIENNIUM AS WELL AS THE LONG RANGE PLAN. THERE WILL BE LONG AND EXHAUSTING DEBATES ON THESE AND MANY OTHER PROGRAM ISSUES. POLITICAL ISSUES WILL INVOLVE THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE PALESTINIANS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, CHILE, AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND POSSIBLY PUERTO RICO AND THE PANAMA CANAL.

13. AT PRESENT THERE ARE 66 ITEMS ON THE PRELIMINARY AGENDA AND WE MUST BE PREPARED TO RESPOND TO ALL OF THEM.

14. PERMDEL STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT IN FILLING THE PRESENT VACANCY THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY INTO ACCOUNT. WE FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT THE

DEPARTMENT REVIEW AND SUPPORT THE MOST RECENT RECOM-
MENDATIONS OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN
SERVE AND OF THE U.S. NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
CONCERNING THE U.S. MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS04340
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760053-1051
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760255/aaaabwbm.tel
Line Count: 336
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD - AN ANALYSIS SUMMARY: THERE HAVE BEEN THREE US MEMBERS OF THE
TAGS: PORG, US, UNESCO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006